

**CLAIMS:**

1. A method of providing files for storage in a network accessible library for use in the transmission of digital audio data, comprising the steps of:
  - a) segmenting an audio stream into a plurality of small digital audio files using natural language gaps in the audio stream;
  - b) determining at least one of a start time, an end time, and a play time of each small digital audio file within the audio stream; and
  - c) creating a descriptor for identifying the audio stream and for ordering the plurality of small digital audio files, the descriptor including the at least one of a start time, an end time, and a play time of each small digital audio file within the audio stream.
2. A method according to claim 1, comprising the steps of:
  - d) repeating steps a) to c) for a plurality of other audio streams; and
  - e) storing the plurality of small digital audio files for each audio stream in the plurality of other audio streams in a different directory in the network accessible library.
3. A method according to claim 2, comprising the step of creating a catalog index to facilitate navigation of the network accessible library.
4. A method according to claim 3, comprising the step of storing a cover art image in each of the different directories, the cover art image selected to represent the corresponding audio stream.
5. A method according to any of claims 1 to 4, wherein step (a) includes searching for a frame, which when played, has a decibel level below a predetermined limit.
6. A method according to any of claims 1 to 4, wherein step (a) comprises segmenting the audio stream into a plurality of randomly sized digital audio files.

7. A method according to any of claims 1 to 4, wherein step (a) includes selecting a maximum size for each of the small digital audio files in dependence upon an expected time to transmit, load, and begin playing a digital audio file of said maximum size.
8. A method according to claim 7, wherein the maximum size for each of the small digital audio files is selected such that the expected time to transmit, load, and begin playing is less than about 5 seconds.
9. A method according to any of claims 1 to 4, wherein step (c) includes manually entering at least one of a title, subtitle, author, theme, plot, performer, publisher, copyright holder, ISBN number, and 'Vchip' rating of the audio stream into the descriptor.
10. A method according to claim 9, wherein step (c) includes manually entering internal media marks, the internal media marks including a label and a time offset in the audio stream corresponding to at least one of a table of contents, chapter markers, a content index, a list of figures, a list of illustrations, a list of tables, footnotes, quotations, and cross-references.
11. A method according to claim 9, wherein step (c) includes manually entering a network location of the plurality of small digital audio files into the descriptor.
12. A method for the transmission of digital audio data, comprising the steps of:
  - a) selecting the audio stream from the network accessible library defined in any of claims 1 to 11;
  - b) determining a first small digital audio file in the plurality of small digital audio files to be transmitted;
  - c) transmitting the first small digital audio file from the network accessible library to a client; and
  - d) using a media player, playing the first small digital audio file.
13. A method according to claim 12, comprising the step of:

- e) simultaneously transmitting one or more subsequent small digital audio files from the plurality of small digital audio files from the network accessible library to the client, while playing the first small digital audio file.
14. A method according to claim 13, comprising the step of:
- f) transmitting and playing successive small digital audio files on demand until available memory space is exhausted or until all small digital audio files in the plurality have been transmitted.
15. A method according to claim 14, comprising the step of:
- g) purging a plurality of already played small digital audio files to increase available memory space.
16. A method according to claim 12, wherein step (b) comprises transmitting the descriptor from the network accessible library to the client.
17. A method according to claim 12, wherein step (a) comprises selecting the audio stream using a bookmark.
18. A method according to any of claims 12 to 16, wherein step (b) comprises the step of using a time offset from one of the descriptor and a bookmark to select the first small digital audio file to be transmitted.
19. A method according to claim 18, wherein step (d) comprises the step of using the time offset to determine a local time offset within the first small digital audio file from which to begin playback.
20. A method according to claim 18, comprising the step of using another time offset to rewind or fast forward through the audio stream.

21. A method according to claim 18, wherein step (b) comprises using a time offset from the descriptor, and wherein the time offset is selected via a label cross-referenced to the time offset, the label including at least one of a table of contents, an index, a list of figures, a list of illustrations, a list of tables, footnotes, quotations, and cross-references.

22. A method according to claim 12, comprising the steps of:

- e) determining a numeric value representing a current time offset into the audio stream, while playing the small digital audio file; and
- f) creating a bookmark using the current time offset and information in the descriptor for identifying the audio stream.

23. A method according to claim 22, wherein the bookmark is created upon one of stopping playback and receiving a request from a user.

24. A method according to claim 22, wherein the information in the descriptor for identifying the audio stream includes the current time offset, a descriptor identifier, and a title of the audio stream.

25. A method according to claim 22, wherein a predetermined value is subtracted from the current time offset.

26. A method according to claim 22, wherein, as successive small digital audio files are played, the current time offset is updated.

27. A method according to claim 26, wherein the current time offset is verified against information in the descriptor pertaining to the successive small digital files, and wherein the current time offset is reset in dependence on the verification.

28. A method according to claim 12, comprising the steps of:

- determining an amount of memory available for receiving transmitted small digital audio files;

determining the severity of a purge process required;  
obtaining a list of small digital audio files corresponding to the audio stream currently resident with the client;  
determining small digital audio files in the list for being retained during the purge process in dependence upon rules predetermined for memory management and the determined severity; and  
purging all small digital audio files not determined to be retained.

29. A method according to claim 28, wherein step (b) comprises using a bookmark to point to the descriptor of the audio stream, the bookmark including a time offset in the audio stream, and wherein the list of small digital audio files to be retained includes small digital audio files with time offsets close to the time offset of the bookmark.

30. A method according to claim 12, wherein step (b) comprises using a unique identifier that is stored on a network based server to provide a list of network-based resources capable providing the descriptor corresponding to the audio stream.

31. A method according to claim 30, wherein the unique identifier is an ISBN number.

32. A method according to claim 30, wherein the unique identifier is obtained from one of a bookmark structure, a card catalog structure, and an advertising structure.

33. A method according to claim 30, comprising the steps of:  
transmitting the unique identifier from the client to the network based server; and,  
receiving the list of network-based resources from the network based server, the network based server obtaining the list by searching a database to find a reference structure identified by the unique identifier.

34. A method according to claim 12, comprising the steps of:  
maintaining a list of servers having copies of files from the network-based library and historical transfer rates thereof;

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